



National Nutrition Month ® Promotes Good Nutrition and Physical Activity

By Semper Fit

March is National Nutrition Month®, which promotes the importance of good nutrition. What we know from the studies is that if you can learn to eat healthy and lead a healthy lifestyle, you are more likely to be healthier later on in life. This year's theme is "Step Up to Nutrition & Health."

Healthy eating is important as it allows you to get the most out of life. To be your best, feel your best and perform your best, it is important to eat well. By following a healthy eating plan using the Food Guide Pyramid, choosing healthier foods more often, watching your portions and exercising, you should be able to be healthy. If weight loss is your goal, you should insure your calorie intake is less than your calorie expenditure. To maintain weight, there should be an equal balance between your calorie intake and expenditure. When making lifestyle changes, it is important to make small changes and not to change everything at one time. Too much change may be unrealistic and will only set you up for failure, so why start behind.

Some ways to get started on eating healthy are:

1. Eat 5 fruits and vegetables a day.
2. Choose low fat dairy products including skim or 1% milk, low fat yogurt, low fat pudding and low fat cheeses.
3. Eat more chicken, fish, turkey, legumes, nuts and seeds to cut down on your cholesterol intake.
4. Choose whole grain breads to meet your daily need of 25-30 grams of dietary fiber.
5. Choose low fat mayo and salad dressings.
6. Don't diet; eat healthy. All foods can be eaten in moderation. There are no good or bad foods, just "better" foods.
7. Grill, broil, bake, and steam foods, avoid fried and breaded foods.
8. Remove the skin from chicken and turkey and trim off the extra fat on meats.

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9. Cut down or cut out all of the empty calorie beverages you may drink (regular soda, juice, Kool-Aid, Gatorade).
10. Eat breakfast every day, even if it is just a glass of milk or a piece of fruit on your way to work.
11. Eat 4-6 smaller meals a day to boost your metabolism.
12. Drink 8-10 8-ounce glasses of water a day.
13. Eat slowly; it takes 20 minutes for your body to feel like it has gotten something to eat.
14. Eat out 1-2 times a week and make the healthiest choices possible.
15. Limit yourself to junk food 3 times a week, but be wary of large servings.
16. Limit alcohol intake to a few drinks per week.
17. Eat a variety of foods to insure you are getting the needed vitamins, minerals, calcium, iron, protein, and fat you need.
18. Read the food labels to decide which products are better to buy.
19. Develop a personal fitness plan that fits your lifestyle.
20. Children learn from their parents. By setting a good example of eating healthy and exercising, your children will learn the appropriate lifestyle.

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